

What is claimed is:

1. A plane source of light comprising:
 - a source of light;
 - a light guide plate which confines light from the source of light, spreads light like a plane, and permits light to go out from the light-leaving surface and from at least a portion of the surface on the side opposite to the light-leaving surface; and
 - a prism sheet arranged facing the side opposite to the light-leaving surface; wherein
 - deflecting patterns are formed on the surface of the light guide plate on the side opposite to the light-leaving surface for reflecting light that propagates through the light guide plate;
 - light reflected by the deflecting patterns goes out from the light-leaving surface in a manner that the direction of a peak intensity thereof is nearly perpendicular to the light-leaving surface;
 - light goes out from the surface on the side opposite to the light-leaving surface in a manner that the direction of a peak intensity thereof is aslant relative to a direction perpendicular to the surface of the opposite side; and
 - light going out from the surface on the opposite side is deflected by the prism sheet in a manner that the direction of a peak intensity thereof is nearly perpendicular to the

surface on the opposite side.

2. A plane source of light according to claim 1, wherein the source of light is a point source of light, and arcuate patterns are formed on the prism sheet with a position corresponding to the point source of light as nearly a center.

3. A plane source of light according to claim 1, wherein patterns of nearly a triangular shape in cross section are formed on the prism sheet, the patterns having, in cross section, a one-side vertical angle on the side of the source of light smaller than the one-side vertical angle on the opposite side.

4. A plane source of light according to claim 1, wherein the deflecting patterns are of nearly a triangular shape in cross section, and an angle of inclination of slopes of the deflecting patterns on the light-emitting surface of the light guide plate and on at least a partial region on the surface on the opposite side on the side remote from the source of light, is different from an angle of inclination of slopes of the deflecting patterns in other regions on the side remote from the source of light.

5. A plane source of light according to claim 1, wherein the deflecting patterns are of nearly a triangular shape in cross section, the slopes thereof assuming at least a partly curved surface on the side remote from the source of light, and a curvature of slopes of the deflecting patterns

on the light-emitting surface of the light guide plate and on at least a partial region on the surface on the opposite side on the side remote from the source of light, is different from a curvature of slopes of the deflecting patterns in other regions on the side remote from the source of light.

6. An image display device comprising image display panels arranged facing the light-leaving surface of the plane source of light of any one of claims 1 to 5 and facing the surface on the side opposite to the light-leaving surface.